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AUTHOR Lentz, Richard
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ABSTRACT

Between 1964 and 1968, "U. S. News and World Report" engaged in symbolic discourse with its readership through its coverage of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "U. S. News" faced a dilemma in the mingling of King's force as a symbol with the power exerted by the egalitarian principles that Gunnar Myrdal identified as components of the American Creed. The magazine first attempted to counter the prevailing definition of King as a symbol of moderate reform by portraying him as a false prophet. Two general themes appeared. The first was that, unwitting or not, King was an agent of communist conspiracy. The second was that the nonviolence and civil disobedience practiced by King threatened the rule of law. King was presented as a threat in both themes to the ordered society "U. S. News" sought to represent. However, when other less moderate black leaders or organizations appeared to pose greater threats than King, "U. S. News" redefined his role and presented him with his symbolic qualities as a moderate reformer intact or augmented. This process continued through the late reformist and radical phases of his career, and, following his death, "U. S. News" once again redefined King as a prophet who promised peace. (Author/CRH)

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Qualitative Studies Division

THE MUTABLE PROPHET:

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., AND

THE ECHO CHAMBER CAMPAIGN OF U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT, 1964-1968

by Richard Lentz

Department of Communications
California State University, Fullerton
Fullerton, California 92634

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THE MUTABLE PROPHET: DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., AND THE ECHO CHAMBER CAMPAIGN OF U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT, 1964-1968

Richard Lentz, Associate Professor
Department of Communications,
California State University, Fullerton
Fullerton, California

ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes U.S. News & World Report's coverage of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., between 1964 and 1968 as an example of the symbolic discourse between publication and reader.

The specific concern is the dilemma created for U.S. News by the mingling of King's force as a symbol in the culture with the power exerted in the society by the egalitarian principles that Gunnar Myrdal identified as the components of the American Creed. It finds that the magazine attempted to counter the prevailing definition of King as a symbol of moderate reform by portraying him as a false prophet. Two general themes appeared. The first was that, unwitting or not, King was an agent of a Communist conspiracy. The second was that the Gandhian nonviolence espoused by King, and in particular the doctrine of civil disobedience, threatened the rule of law in the United States. Thus, in both themes, King was presented as a threat to the ordered society that U.S. News sought to represent.

While struggling against the general definition of King, U.S. News on occasion found itself in need of the very qualities of King as a symbol that it sought to demolish. This occurred when other leaders or organizations in the black movement appeared to the magazine to pose greater threats than did King himself. At such times, King was presented with his symbolic qualities as a moderate reformer intact or augmented by U.S. News.

The process of defining and redefining King continued through the period under study, which encompassed the late reformist and the radical phases of his career. Following his death in 1968, U.S. News once more found itself in need of King as a symbol, in order to counter threatening figures in the black movement, and again reinterpreted King as a prophet who promised not a sword but peace.

Presented to the Qualitative Studies Division at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual Convention in Gainesville, Florida, August 5-7, 1984.

THE MUTABLE PROPHET:
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THE ECHO CHAMBER CAMPAIGN OF U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT, 1964-1968

For much of its history, U.S. News & World Report has been most effective as a news magazine when it assumed the posture and the voice appropriate to a watchman at the gates of the Republic. The posture, one of alertness to signs of danger to the nation, and the voice, marked by tones ranging from stridency to near hysteria as it raised the hue and cry, were critical elements in the persona of U.S. News, the editorial personality that was reconstituted each week in the enduring symbolic discourse between reader and publication.[1]

Other components contributed, to be sure, to that persona. A distinctive conservatism that often crossed the boundary to become reactionist and continuing opposition to the growing power of the federal government are probably more widely recognized components. Yet attention to those matters tends to obscure the fact that U.S. News was fundamentally a creature bound to the status quo. Its strategies of address were in keeping with what Richard Hofstadter called "the paranoid style of American politics," the central concern of which is the repression of threats to the society as constituted.[2]

In practice, this meant that the magazine's distinctiveness--thus its survival in the internecine struggle among magazines--depended to a considerable degree upon the warnings that it provided to a receptive readership about forces and persons it perceived as threats to the nation.

Not least among the latter was Martin Luther King, Jr. As a young Baptist minister, King had risen to the leadership of the black civil rights movement beginning with the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955-1956. King's social activism in the South had excited the hostility of U.S. News, a matter understandable given the magazine's sympathies for the peculiar racial customs of the South and, as well, its general distaste for social change. The most intensive

campaign against King was conducted, however, between 1964 and 1968, when the Southern movement was winding down and beginning to become eclipsed by the events of the national black movement and when King was becoming more radical and was casting about for a national stage for his activism.

This paper examines the echo-chamber campaign mounted by U.S. News against King during that period. The primary source of data is the news magazine itself. The texts were approached with three purposes in mind: to locate recurring images and interpretations; to analyze and account for exceptions to these general patterns; and, finally, to explicate examples in which editorial silence was significant.

Both archival and secondary sources have been consulted in order to construct a parallel research mechanism that locates the reportage within a historical context. This mechanism was necessary because the study tracks the coverage of King across time and relates its elements--in particular, the exceptions to general patterns and the instances of silence about key matters --to the dynamics of a given historical moment.

The central purpose of the study is to examine the coverage of King as an example of the symbolic discourse between reader and publication. In order to accomplish this, however, it was also necessary to arrive at some understanding of the force of King as a symbol in the culture, and, equally important, to relate this to the struggle of a conservative publication against that symbolism. More specifically, the study treats the dilemma created for U.S. News by King's standing as a symbol--a dilemma which requires preliminary exploration at this point.

The Dilemma and the American Creed

During the five years encompassed by this study, one idea dominated the coverage of King by U.S. News. This was that King was a threat to the nation. This portrayal of King took--one may observe, had to take--a particular form

because of the mingling of King's force as an American symbol with the power exerted in the culture by the American consensus. Egalitarian ideals, which Gunnar Myrdal identified as "the cement in the structure of this great and disparate nation," were included in the consensus. As analyzed by Myrdal, the force of those ideals was this:

> . . .America, compared to every other country in Western civilization, large or small, has the most explicitly expressed system of general ideals in reference to human relationships. This body of ideals is more widely understood and appreciated than similar ideals are anywhere else. . . .To be sure, the political creed of America is not very satisfactorily effectuated in actual social life. But as principles which ought to rule, the Creed has been made conscious to everyone in American society.[3]

The dilemma for U.S. News & World Report was that it could not effectively deny the justice of King's cause--equality for Americans who happened to be black--without denying the consensus about the principles which, as Myrdal said, ought to rule.

To be sure, the magazine could and did offer racist doctrines that amounted to little more than assertions that the black man was unfit to enjoy the blessings of American liberty. It did so, for example, by publishing pseudo-scientific theories that posited the genetic inferiority of blacks. Similarly, it appealed to history, citing the Southern school of Reconstruction historiography that damned that period of black political power in the South as little more than the rule of the ignorant controlled by the corrupt. And the magazine could--indeed, did--attempt to divert attention from issues of equality and justice by asserting that the destruction of segregation in the South was being accomplished by means of a heretical interpretation of the states' rights clauses of the Constitution, if not a conspiracy to destroy that sacred covenant itself.

Even so, such arguments and interpretations did not resolve the dilemma of U.S. News. In part, this was due to the mustiness of the ideas themselves, which had long since been demolished by scientists and historians, and, in the

case of the doctrine of states' rights, by the centralization of government power in Washington since the New Deal. In part, too, the magazine had no choice but to confront the prevailing definition of King as a prophet of American ideals whose voice, raised most memorably during the 1963 March on Washington, inspired millions of Americans with a vision of the sure and certain coming of brotherhood and justice. Confronted by this definition, U.S. News could only assert the opposite: that King was a false prophet.

Two general themes marked that campaign against him. In the first, King was depicted as a leader whose practices and doctrines threatened the rule of law. He was, for example, portrayed as a relentless trouble-maker flitting from crisis to crisis, the implication being that he created (and profited) from social turmoil. Another was the assertion that King's social activism admitted of no restraints--the demonstration of this being his refusal to accept compromises that even his allies regarded as proper. The most recurring element, however, was associated with civil disobedience; the effect of this was that a bloody tide of anarchism would be loosed in the United States.

The second theme also relied upon a portrayal of King as a radical bent not only upon undermining the rule of law but of the foundations of Republic. The source of the danger was not only King but Communism. In the pages of U.S. News, King became an agent of foreign tyranny that was receiving aid and comfort from persons enlisted in a Fifth Column.

In thus attacking King, the magazine was at the same time paying tacit tribute to his force as a symbol; why, otherwise, expend so much energy upon the attempt to destroy him as a symbol.

As significant as the portrait of King as false prophet was precisely the opposite use of him by the magazine. This illustrated another dilemma of U.S. News. However much it struggle to destroy King as a symbol of moderate reform, now and again U.S. News now and again had urgent need of the very qualities

that it sought almost desperately to undermine. The need arose when other leaders or organizations in the black movement appeared to pose greater threats. On such occasions, King was presented by U.S. News with his force as a symbol intact or augmented, and he became a leader of the middle way, a prophet who promised not a sword but peace.

King did not stand alone at such moments. He was instead counterposed against the more threatening figures, his symbolic qualities making their radicalism all the more apparent. Thus in this manner would U.S. News create a forum in which radicalism and deviance could be articulated and the distinction between responsible leaders and irresponsible radicals could "be portrayed in sharper relief."[4]

U.S. News repented its annointing of King as a moderate with unseemly haste. Still, the manner in which the magazine made use of King as a symbol testified both to his standing in American society and to the urgent need of U.S. News, which, as a matter of fact, had very little choice in the matter. King was the most widely known black leader in the country and the one most closely identified with the social and political advancement of his race. To counter rising threats from within the black movement, U.S. News needed not a leader from that movement but a black symbol; in Martin Luther King, the magazine found one and, however reluctantly, used it.

Maintaining the Symbolic Discourse

The shifts in the portrayal of King--from damning him as a false prophet to proclaiming him an American symbol--would appear at first glance to disrupt the dialogue between reader and magazine that is so essential to the survival of the latter. For a number of reasons, however, those shifts probably appear more abrupt in retrospect than they did to readers as the time. The news magazine must make sense of the world, imposing patterns of meanings consonant with readers' expectations. On one level, that appears to require

patterns based on a historical perspective. Fundamentally, however, the news magazine provides a pseudo-historicity; the sense of understanding of events and personalities offered to readers was dissolved and reconstituted with each issue, often with little reference to that prevailing the week before. The limitation of the frame of reference enables the news magazine to make fairly dramatic shifts in emphasis with minimal disruption of the discourse with its audience.

Disruption also was avoided--in the specific case of U.S. News and its presentation of King--because of other factors. For one thing, those dramatic shifts were fairly infrequent over the five years of the study. More important, the reinterpretation of King as an American prophet of moderation and reason occurred against a backdrop of other events and personalities which made that alteration not only tenable but reasonable to readers. To put it another way, King would appear to represent a very definite lesser of evils if the alternative was drawn sharply enough. A final factor to be considered is that the echo chamber campaign against King often took a peculiarly indirect form.

The Echo Chamber

U.S. News & World Report provided its own direct assertions that King was a radical and a threat to the nation, but the campaign against him between 1964 and 1968 may be best understood as a series of recurring echoes.

Those echoes appeared, for example, in the form of statements taken from other sources and republished by U.S. News. The fact that the statements may have been made by others is, however, far less important than the fact that U.S. News chose them because of their "fit" with a given editorial tack of the moment.[5] The outlines of this editorial tactic of U.S. News were first grasped by that perceptive critic of the media, Ben Bagdikian, then a young reporter. In terms of the civil rights movement, he noted that "there is evidence

that U.S. News & World Report reaches out for segregationist views. And in absolute measure, the magazine tells the reader more of the segregationist view than of the integrationist."[6]

But there was another dimension to the echo chamber campaign. It was not merely a matter of selecting and republishing articles or speeches that parroted the editorial position of the magazine. Quite often, U.S. News would provide an echo of the first statement, either in the same issue or subsequent weeks or both, and this was done in order to drive home its point.

In principle, then, the echo chamber campaign was simplicity itself, relying upon repetition of themes that over time would complete a satisfying portrait of King as a false prophet. It also relied upon another factor, one critical to maintaining the symbolic discourse with readers, this being assumptions about knowledge held by its audience.

The most striking example of this assumed knowledge was that in many instances contextual rather than direct identification of King would be provided. For example, by citing the award of the Nobel Prize for Peace, U.S. News could be assured that readers would understand that King was the subject even though his name was not mentioned. Similarly, contextual identification appeared with grinding monotony in the statement that King preached one thing--nonviolence--but his actions led to the opposite result. Far more than any other American, black or white, King was associated in the public mind with Gandhian nonviolence and the doctrine of civil disobedience and, in addition, with civil rights campaigns marked by violence, most often because of police action but on occasion due to followers who escaped the discipline of nonviolence.

It would have been simpler, of course, had U.S. News provided the requisite identification of King; and not only simpler but in compliance with journalistic standards. Yet, from the perspective of the magazine direct identification would not have been so effective.

One reason was the nature of the warning that U.S. News was broadcasting. The danger cited was often described in ominous tones that implied the existence of a Fifth Column. Inasmuch as a conspiracy is secret, given the fact that the danger that is only dimly perceived is all the more frightening, the message of U.S. News gained rather than lost strength because of its vagueness.

Another reason appears in the persona of the publication. Certain features --its surface drabness, its practice of publishing dry official reports, its question-and-answer interviews, and its publication of some views that ran counter to those of its founder David Lawrence--created an aura of journalistic objectivity not enjoyed by the other news magazines.[7] An unremitting and openly conducted campaign against King would have damaged, perhaps destroyed, an important component of the persona that set U.S. News apart from its competitors, Time and Newsweek.

Finally, perhaps most important of all, the magazine could be reasonably certain that its message about King would get across; that is to say, certain tones would be heard and certain inferences drawn by readers. In the absence of that assurance, U.S. News would have been creating a nonsensical and eventually intolerable state of affairs for a journal that relied upon popular support and confidence. A rough analogy would be the broadcasting of a warning that a dangerous intruder was at large in a neighborhood--but neglecting to include the information that would have enabled the inhabitants to identify the source of the danger.

1964: The Echoes Begin

Although King's campaigns against Southern segregation had aroused the enmity of Lawrence's magazine, the echo chamber campaign did not begin until 1964. Two reasons probably account for its belated initiation.

The first was that King's prestige had risen to an extraordinary height

by 1964, although this was due to principally to his activities the year before in Birmingham. King had begun 1963 under a cloud. After his disastrous defeat in the Albany movement of 1962, King gambled that he could conquer Birmingham, the citadel of Southern segregation. With some unwitting assistance from the fire and police commissioner of that city, who passed into infamy in American culture as Bull Connor of Birmingham, King did just that. Success in Birmingham was followed within a few months by King's "I Have a Dream" speech to more than two hundred thousand demonstrators assembled before the Lincoln Memorial in the 1963 March on Washington. To be sure, that speech, evoking American images of brotherhood and racial reconciliation, moved King to the forefront of the black movement. But the honors that served to fix the force of King as a symbol in the culture--the designation of him as Time's Man of the Year and, more important, as the Nobel Peace Prize laureate--came in 1964.[8]

The second reason was the public appearance in 1964 of a small tip of the campaign to destroy King that was being conducted by J. Edgar Hoover and his Federal Bureau of Investigation, the man and the organization in the federal government most heavily promoted by U.S. News.[9]

The first faint echoes began appearing earlier, however, when it was clear that Martin Luther King was a force to be reckoned with. In February, for example, U.S. News offered a picture of senseless racial militancy in Atlanta, King's hometown and a city that U.S. News described as a model for race relations. King was chosen by U.S. News as the chief advocate of continuing those demonstrations. His advocacy of that position, read by itself, would not appear unreasonable and would appear to be stripped of any meaning apart from the events that motivated his remarks. But the comments did not stand alone, and the echoes of King the threat reverberated in the following weeks. In the issue of March 30, for example, King was threatening more racial trouble:

> The promise of bigger demonstrations came from integration leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,. . . .
>
> The South. "We will concentrate our efforts in Alabama. We are hoping to get ten thousand recruits who will be willing to spend vacations in jail."
>
> Civil rights bill. In connection with a Senate filibuster, "we definitely plan action in Washington."
>
> Political campaigns. In the North, "I plan a very massive, intensified registration drive."
>
> Boycott. A "nationwide selective-buying program" will be launched."[10]

Considered against the jittery mood of the times, King's remarks were enough to broadcast a frightening message. The proposal for a new campaign in Alabama was one--and it was not simply a matter of concern in that state. During and following the Birmingham campaign, hundreds of demonstrations had been staged throughout the nation, and by no means were these restricted to expressions of support for the attack on Jim Crow. The black scholar, C. Eric Lincoln, caught the mood, North and South, among many whites: "The white man feels that he has given up something that was uniquely his. Perhaps he has given up too much? And yet the blacks are not satisfied. They push. They continue to push!. . ."[11]

For any readers still unpersuaded, U.S. News offered much the same idea in the same issue. It did this by associating King with another symbolic figure, Malcolm X, the brilliant and charismatic proselytizer of the Nation of Islam, popularly known as the Black Muslims. Malcolm X had been a devil figure for many whites since the turn of the decade because of his rhetoric of hatred of whites and armed self-defense by blacks. Through journalistic sleights of hand, U.S. News made it appear that the tactics of King differed little, if at all, from those of Malcolm X.[12] It was a variation of the tactic of establishing guilt by association.

In April, however, U.S. News settled onto another tack in its coverage of King. This was to portray him as a false prophet and promoter of alien doctrines that had as their goal the destruction of the Republic. There was,

for example, the complaint that would appear again and again in U.S. News: the doctrine of civil disobedience was undermining the rule of law. More important at the moment, at least as measured by the number of echoes, was the allegation that King was being influenced by Communists. The initial reference was provided when U.S. News republished portions of a syndicated column written by Joseph Alsop, who alleged that King's organization, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, was being infiltrated by Communists. That did not end the matter: the same issue was resurrected the following week, although King was not directly identified, in an article summarizing testimony by J. Edgar Hoover before a Congressional committee and in David Lawrence's column written specifically for U.S. News.[13]

The magazine's campaign against King rose to a crescendo during the fall. Not by happenstance, this occurred when Hoover went public with the FBI's attack on King. The ostensible reason for Hoover's public outburst--he told a group of women reporters in Washington that King was the "most notorious liar in the country"--was that King had criticized the conduct of FBI agents in the South. Actually, only the fact that Hoover was directing an attack against King publicly was new. As early as 1962, Hoover had scrawled on an FBI memorandum that "'King is no good,'" and in May or that year King's name was added to the list of individuals to be rounded up and detained during any national emergency. Thereafter, to the point of King's death and beyond, the FBI conducted what was the "single most extensive program on an individual in the bureau's history."[14]

The initial response by U.S. News to Hoover's attack on King demonstrated its esteem for the FBI director and its agreement with his sentiments. To preserve its reputation for objectivity, the magazine granted space to King for a reply. The amount of space--both for text and photograph--was so much less

as to indicate that the magazine wished to drown out King's reply. Intended or not, that was the effect, and furthermore, U.S. News sought in a subsequent issue to demonstrate that Hoover's actions were sanctioned by the Johnson administration.[15]

As striking as the journalistic manuevering was the conspiratorial tone of subsequent stories. King was depicted as an agent of foreign dictatorial practices as U.S. News shifted the focus of its coverage of the dispute between Hoover and "Negro spokesmen"--a term that had to be read as King, given the intense glare of publicity on the affair[16]--to the issue of national police forces.

In one way, that was a logical development. The publicly accepted motivation for Hoover's outburst was King's complaint that the FBI had failed to protect civil rights workers in the South. Yet U.S. News carried that issue far beyond the constitutional question of the authority of the federal government to intervene in the affairs of the state.

On one side in the moral drama written by U.S. News was J. Edgar Hoover, doughty defender of American liberties as exemplified by his declaration that "'We don't want a Gestapo.'" On the other were those "Negro spokesmen"--in effect, King--advocating the formation of a centralized police force such as had trampled liberties underfoot elsewhere in the world. The presentation was both stark and riddled with conspiratorial tones:

> The choice then will lie between a national police system, such as exists behind the Iron Curtain and in some other foreign countries, and the objective force into which the FBI has been developed under. . . Mr. Hoover.
>
> History shows deep-seated abuses in nations where police systems have operated under political control of central governments. Examples include the terrorism of Hitler's Gestapo, the atrocities committed by the Soviet secret police, and the reign of terror today in Communist Cuba, a police state only ninety miles from the U.S.[17] [Emphasis added]

In other words, the enemy was at the gates to the Republic and was being aided by a Fifth Column within. Those tones of danger and conspiracy had been

sounded before, if in not so strong a fashion; King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference, so U.S. News had reported some months ago, was being infiltrated by Communists. And the tones were being echoed again in the same issue in which the warning appeared about the "police state only ninety miles from the U.S." The reverberation was picked up in an article that republished excerpts from a speech delivered by Hoover, including this key paragraph:

> "It is a great misfortune that the zealots of pressure groups always think with their emotions--seldom with reason. They have no compunction in carping, lying, and exaggerating with the fiercest passions, spearheaded at times by Communists and moral degenerates.18

Taken alone, Hoover's remarks would be read simply as generalized criticism with no identifiable target. At the time, of course, it was all but impossible to take them outside the context of the public dispute between Hoover and King, as U.S. News was well aware. The references to "carping," "lying," and to Communist influence all had appeared in the magazine's own coverage,[19] not to mention that of other news media. And those same echoes were being sounded elsewhere in the same issue that reported Hoover's speech, and would be sounded yet again, if in somewhat milder form, two weeks hence.[20]

Thus was sketched the portrait of Martin Luther King in 1964 by U.S. News & World Report. He was the author in the United States of the pernicious doctrine of civil disobedience that threatened the primacy of the rule of law; if not a Communist himself, he was controlled or influenced by Communists; his goal was establishment of centralized government that would destroy freedom as surely as it had in Cuba, no more than ninety miles distant; and he had slandered J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI, the man and the organization that had merged into one entity that signaled rigorous, even-handed justice in the society, by complaining of the FBI's failure to protect civil rights workers.

The echo chamber campaign was well under way, carried forward by both statement and silence, and, for the most part, scarcely relieved by contrary

ideas or discordant interpretations.[21] To those readers who shared the dark suspicions of U.S. News & World Report that a Fifth Column was busily undermining the foundations of the Republic, the proof was evident in the person of Martin Luther King.

1965: Selma and Watts

Two series of events dominated the black movement in 1965. The first was the voting rights campaign in the small Alabama town of Selma, which was conducted principally by King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. The second was the first of the great urban explosions of the 1960's, the riots in the Watts district of Los Angeles, in which King's role of a peacemaker was both minor and unsuccessful.

The Selma campaign, which promoted the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, was a signal that Jim Crow segregation was dying. The most important event was a demonstration march, which was not led by King, on March 7. State police officers and posse members deputized by Sheriff James Clark, who became a new Bull Connor, attacked and broke up the demonstration with brutal force. As a result, there was a national outcry against this latest example of the violation of American ideals in the South, culminating in President Johnson's address to Congress that closed with the ringing declaration, "We shall overcome," from the anthem of the civil rights movement. The symbolic denouement of the Selma campaign was a march led by King from Selma to Montgomery, the capital of Alabama.[22]

Watts was another kind of signal. Civil disorders erupted in Watts less than a week after the voting rights bill was signed into law. Watts was the conclusive demonstration that the black movement was no longer confined to the South, and that black Americans were stirring under an urgent sense of injustice caused by de facto discrimination rather than de jure segregation.

The response of U.S. News to the Selma campaign occurred in two phases. In the first, the magazine sought to demonstrate that King was a false prophet. In the second, albeit briefly, he emerged with all the virtues of a leader following the middle way, a wondrous transformation that U.S. News was compelled now and then to fashion.

In February, U.S. News was on the first tack, as is demonstrated by its belated attention to the topic, "How Martin Luther King Won the Nobel Peace Prize." The article was striking for several reasons. First, more attention was given to this matter than the original report of the award to King. Second, the article was published more than two months after that announcement, and thus appeared tied to the Selma campaign. Finally, perhaps most important, were the conspiratorial tones that the magazine sounded with these questions: "Was Dr. King considered by the prize-givers to be a peacemaker abroad--or in the U.S.? Who proposed him for the. . .award? Who made the final decision? And what was the basis for their decision?" Those questions had appeared in boldfaced type as an introduction to the article. In fact, the questions themselves were not sustained by the reportage in the main text, but U.S. News had made its point in the very act of raising those questions.[23]

It was considerably more difficult to raise questions about the campaign itself. U.S. News was confronted by that dilemma in Selma. It could not deny the rightness of the goals of King, that is, the right to vote, without denying the ideals of the nation itself. It could assert, in effect, that King was creating a crisis unnecessarily.(A grain of truth to this: the SCLC beyond doubt had done its share to create a crisis in Selma;[24] whether there would have been much progress in securing voting rights in the absence of a crisis is another matter entirely.) And U.S. News could seek to demonstrate that King was a false prophet, that his handiwork in Selma, in the words of David Lawrence, would lead to a distortion of. . .the Constitution."[25]

A delicate situation, delicately handled by shifting the focus from the right to vote to states' rights; by in effect arguing that, of all things, King had been given a prize for peacemaking; and by painting him as a radical not content to allow the orderly processes of government and law to work. In sum, King was a false prophet.

The problem was that this interpretation was short-lived: other events intervened that required a recasting of King as a symbol.

This ordering was forced upon U.S. News because a greater threat appeared --the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. SNCC grew out of the sit-ins at the beginning of the decade. The once idealistic young cadres of SNCC had grown increasingly radical and about as disaffected with both Martin Luther King and conventional liberalism in the intervening years. The Bloody Sunday demonstration on March 7 was an example. Although one of the leaders of that march was John Lewis, who led SNCC, the organization as a body declined to participate. Its members had been working in Selma for years before King came on the scene, and during the SCLC campaign, SNCC activities were shifted to the state capital, Montgomery. One of the demonstrations in that city resulted in a violent confrontation with sheriff's deputies, who broke up the demonstration with a Cossack-like charge. The leaders and members of SNCC were outraged. King had to hurry over to Montgomery as a peacemaker, and the incident was closed with an apology from the sheriff.[26]

It also ended with a new-found, if briefly held appreciation of King's virtues by U.S. News. The magazine reshuffled its stock of symbols and found, on the one side, a SNCC leader who offered these words:

> "If those crooks in the White House, those crooks in the Senate...those crooks in the House don't do something, we're going up there to Washington, and we're going to stop traffic; we're going to stop every car, every truck; we're going to show them the biggest piece of civil disobedience the world has ever seen."[27]

On the other was King. Against the specter of civil disobedience raised by SNCC

King was beginning to look positively benign to U.S. News. King, to be sure,

> has been called arrogant and foolhardy by some Negro leaders. Some of his campaigns have failed, and brought Dr. King's strategy and administrative talents under fire.
>
> It has been charged that he stirs up new racial trouble in the South whenever the SCLC needs funds, or when his image as the leading voice of the Southern Negro protest seems to be slipping.[28]

. . .Still this amounted to little more than praising King by publishing fainter damns. Those allegations were scarcely new; many had been dogging King for years. On the whole, in fact, the article was rather more complimentary than critical in tone. In this respect, that article echoed a much more extensive story in the same issue on the future battlegrounds of the black movement, and the observation by U.S. News that "serious threats to Dr. King's overall leadership of the civil rights movement were developing." At another time and from another source, U.S. News doubtless would have welcomed just such a challenge: it had implied as much in the past and would do so in the future. For the present, U.S. News worried itself and, no doubt, its readers with an appalling prospect: "As Negroes press for further gains, who will lead them--'moderates,' such as Dr. King, or those who threaten 'the biggest piece of civil disobedience the world has ever seen'?"[29]

Thus came U.S. News to annoint as a "moderate" a foolhardy black leader who sought out confrontations and created racial crises, and who seemingly was engaged, consciously or otherwise, in a movement that would undermine the foundations of the Republic. And for reasons simple and complex: simple because King was the lesser of evils arrayed before U.S. News; complex because King's force as a symbol, which the magazine customarily sought to destroy, was being used by it to discredit the greater threat.

The interpretation lasted for one week before U.S. News shifted back into the echo chamber campaign. In the issue of April 12, U.S. News recycled,

without specifically mentioning King, the confrontation with Hoover. Standing against those "Negro spokesmen," now identified as "some Negro leaders," was the Horatio-like figure of J. Edgar Hoover. "Now the FBI Director," said U.S. News, "once again had made it clear that the Bureau he has run for more than forty years will not be involved in any action smacking of 'totalitarian tactics.'"[30]

Thereafter, U.S. News alternated between two courses: damning King as a subversive and complaining of the effects of civil disobedience. The latter element was the concern of David Lawrence a week after his magazine praised Hoover and damned his enemies:

> . . .Some clergymen recently have insisted that they are morally right as they urge disobedience whenever a citizen feels a law is "unjust."
>
> The individual, to be sure, takes risks in challenging the law--risks of punishment. But is a pastor right in encouraging anyone to disobey the laws of the land because of some alleged "higher duty"?[31]

What Lawrence was requiring of his readers was the knowledge that Martin Lu- King was that pastor. The vagueness of the identifications notwithstanding, Lawrence could be quite certain that his readers would provide that linkage. King was the clergyman who, beyond a shadow of a doubt, was most clearly associated with doctrine of civil disobedience. But that was not all. Given the enormous amount of publicity then surrounding the Selma campaign and the march to Montgomery, it would have been difficult not to take King as the target of Lawrence's broadside.

With Lawrence's magazine back on course, the echoes were coming with increasing speed and force. The conspiratorial tone was provided for U.S. News by a Congressman from Alabama. First of all, the Selma campaign was the result of a conspiracy between King and the "Federal Government." But there was more, a hint of the Fifth Column at work in Selma as it had been in effecting another defeat of America:

> "It might make my story a little more believable," said Mr. Dickinson, "if you remember that a part of the high-level planning that went into the Bay of Pigs invasion (of Cuba) was also assisting in the Selma invasion."[32]

Not content, the magazine added other evidence to support Congressman Dickinson's thesis. There was, for example, the disclosure that a Justice Department official had been forced to resign because "he had provided transportation for. . .King. . .in a car rented at Government expense." Even that was not enough. U.S. News rewrote a previously published story--the better to make the facts fit better with the thesis--about the costs incurred when President Johnson ordered Alabama National Guardsmen into federal service and dispatched some Army troops to protect the demonstrators during the march from Selma to Montgomery.[33]

The most damning echo, however, was the resurrection of the accusations that King was an agent of Communism. It, too, was provided by Congressman Dickinson who

> accused several civil rights leaders of links with Communists or "Communist front" groups. He complained that he had been denied access to information about Dr. Martin Luther King in the files of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.[34]

It is just possible that Dickinson indeed had been denied access to those files by Hoover; if so, he was a rare bird in official circles in Washington in which the FBI was actively attempting to peddle that information. With that report, however, U.S. News was able to make two points. The first was that Dickinson's complaint actually supported the magazine's portrayal of Hoover as the defender of American rights; he was, after all, refusing to open King's files. The second point was made by juxtaposition; the two statements together clearly implied that King was a Communist or associated with them.

And about this point, U.S. News, abandoning for the moment the facade of journalistic objectivity, was permitting no debate in its pages.

"Some members of Congress challenged Mr. Dickinson in floor debate," the magazine reported. "The full record of that debate filled pages 8307 to 8321 of the Congressional Record for April 27."[35]

The echo chamber campaign continued throughout the late spring and summer of 1965. Perhaps the most striking example was published in the issue of July 5 when the full text of an address by the retired Supreme Court justice, Charles E. Whittaker, was published. Whittaker analyzed the mood of social unrest in the nation and found that

> "a large part of the current rash and rapid spread of lawlessness in our land has been at least fostered and inflammed by the preachments of self-appointed leaders of minority groups to 'obey the good laws, but the violate the bad ones'--which, of course, simply advocates violation of the laws they do not like, or, in other words, the taking of the law into their own hands."[36]

No names were provided, of course, but in King's case, one was not needed. Whittaker's reference to a foreign group that awarded "him a prize, of all things, for his contributions to peace," sufficed save for those oblivious to the award of the world's most signal honor to the most visible black leader in America.

The speech by Mr. Justice Whittaker also was remarkable in other ways. The first was that U.S. News would turn again and again to Whittaker in the future when it was in need of someone with official standing to scourge him in print. The second was that the speech was essentially an echoes of echoes; it built upon previously published stories in U.S. News. These included complaints by the president of Howard University in Washington about lawlessness and Communists on campus; items to the effect that the FBI and White House were disturbed by increasing Communist infiltration of and influence in the black movement and on the campuses; and other references concerning, as Whittaker put it, King's "apparently insatiable appetite for power."[37]

And yet another round of reverberations was to come, starting in the next issue with three additional articles. The first two stories reported that

Communists were engaged in black protest activities in Chicago and Alabama. In one, the mayor of Chicago, Richard Daley, complained that Communists were behind the movement to force the removal of the superintendent of the city's school system, Benjamin Willis. King was not cited by name, but he was effectively linked to that story. U.S. News pulled together that story with a second under a shared headline, "Communists and Civil Rights--How Closely Linked?" The companion article reported the findings of an Alabama legislative commission "which has pinned a Communist label on several civil rights organizations working in the South." The chief target of the commission was King, identified by name.[38]

The two articles cancelled out the weaknesses of the other. Given his campaigns in Montgomery, Birmingham, and Selma, for example, one might expect that authorities in Alabama would be less than fair to King. The juxtaposition of a seemingly related article from Chicago made the claims from the South appear to be less motivated by race. In turn, the somewhat weaker and vague complaints about Communists loose in Chicago were strengthened by the detailed assertions of the commission in Alabama. And the point was hammered home a third time in the same issue. Whittaker's statements and the two articles from Chicago and Alabama were echoed yet another time in a column written by David Lawrence.[39]

A week later, U.S. News picked up the attack again. The opening was provided by the decision of King to take a position on the Vietnam war. In retrospect, that position was fairly mild, amounting to little more than calling for a negotiated settlement and some give and take by both sides. The reaction --not only from U.S. News but from many whites and some blacks to the right of the black movement--was swift and damning. The gist of the reaction was that King should stick to issues of race and not wander into foreign policy. Stunned by the reaction, King effectively retreated from the war issue for two years.[40]

Retreat he might, but not before U.S. News got in its shot. By itself, its observation probably would have been of little moment, but it could not be taken in isolation when U.S. News carefully noted that King "urges negotiation with the Communist-supported Viet Cong to stop the war. . . ."[41]

Another opening was provided by the Watts disorders in August of 1965, but it required careful hewing of the editorial matter at the disposal of U.S. News. Judiciously using various journalistic devices--silence being one of them--the magazine made much out of very little.

The rioting cost the lives of more than thirty persons, resulted in injuries to almost nine hundred others, and produced an estimated two hundred million dollars in property damages over six days. King's involvement was limited to a brief appearance in Watts, but his attempt to help restore peace was a failure.[42]

Although King was counterposed to more threatening figures,[43] U.S. News continued its main task of portraying him as a relentless troublemaker and radical. King and the SCLC "are broadening their objectives to include almost every demand raised by Negroes everywhere." To back up that point, the magazine compiled a catalogue of causes that King had adopted:

> In Chicago, Dr. King led demonstrators backing local Negroes' demands for ouster of the school superintendent. In Washington, D.C.--where Negro residents outnumber whites and Congress governs the city--he spoke out for "home rule." In Philadelphia, he demanded admission of Negroes to a private school set up by a rich man's will for "poor, white, male orphans." In Cleveland, he spurred a voter registration drive among Negroes.[44]

With the thesis embedded in that listing, King's journey into Watts as a peacemaker, successful or not, would not have been appropriate. U.S. News therefore maintained a studied silence about King's trip to Los Angeles.[45]

Silence also was an effective tool in other instances. One noteworthy example was reportage of racial problems in Springfield, Massachusetts. The city was described as a model of racial harmony, but U.S. News

complained that outsiders, "Negro agitators. . .crying police brutality" and dictating "shock tactics" were causing bitterness between the races. The implication that Springfield was another campaign of King's arose from three references that established the theme that outsiders intended to make the city the "Selma of the North." Not until the last paragraph of a three-page story were the "agitators" identified as representatives of the Congress of Racial Equality, not the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Even that paragraph left open the possibility that King's organization had participated in the "agitation" in Springfield.[46]

From Springfield and its troubles, U.S. News proceeded two issues later to the ultimate development of King-the-radical. The vehicle was a speech by James S. Kemper, Jr., from which U.S. News selected excerpts such as the following:

> More than any other single man,. . .King is responsible for the development of mass crime in the civil rights movement.
>
> "Nonviolence as practiced by Dr. King and his followers means that civil rights advocates may break the law without moral blame if they are willing to pay the consequences. . . .
>
> "The spectacle of a Nebel Peace Prize winner, supported by thousands of white and Negro clergymen, endorsing the breaking of any law is an open invitation to lawbreaking by anyone who chooses to do so....
>
> "Whatever may be the intentions of Dr. King and those who follow his philosophy, they have led the way to exactly the kind of violence that took place this summer in Los Angeles and other cities....
>
> "We start out with something called 'nonviolent protests,' and we end up by providing a haven for Black Muslims, Black Nationalists, Communists, Trotskyites, and the worst criminals of the Negro underworld leading the citizenry into organized violence and mass destruction."[47]

All in all, this was a fairly grave listing of sins and a frightening collection of associates for a man whom U.S. News had described as a "moderate" a few months earlier. Then, of course, U.S. News had seen the cadres of SNCC as the more radical, the more dangerous, even if it repented within a week's time.

U.S. News provided no rebuttal of Kemper's allegations. But, then, if the words were Kemper's, the themes were those of U.S. News; indeed Kemper had been merely echoing the themes that had been sounded in the echo chamber, whether in

news accounts, columns written by David Lawrence, or items reprinted from other sources. With the exception of King's brief involvement in 1965 in the war issue, Kemper's remarks collected into a few paragraphs the central thesis of U.S. News that Martin Luther King was bent on a course that would lead the nation into anarchy and destroy the fundamental freedoms cherished by Americans. That article was by no means the last word that U.S. News would have on the subject in 1965,[48] but it distilled into the essence the message being preached by the magazine.

1966: Chicago and the Rise of Black Power

Two campaigns dominated the career of King in 1966. The first was the Chicago Freedom Movement, which engaged the major part of his energies during the year. The Chicago movement was an ultimately unsuccessful attempt by King to use the strategy and tactics of the Southern movement against de facto discrimination in the North, most notably segregated housing patterns. It was unsuccessful, in part, because the social problems were more complex than Jim Crow segregation. Associated with this, however, was the failure of King to manuever Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago into repressive actions that would make Daley the symbolic equivalent in the North of Bull Connor of Birmingham or Jim Clark of Selma.

The second campaign, more limited in scope and time, was equally controversial. It involved a march through Mississippi begun by James Meredith, the black veteran who broke the color line at the University of Mississippi. After Meredith was wounded by a white man firing from ambush, King and other black leaders took up his banner. The resumption of the Meredith March became remembered chiefly because of the Black Power cry raised by Stokely Carmichael, whose election to the leadership of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee was a public signal that SNCC was moving away from reform and toward radical

and revolutionary activities. As was the case in the previous year, Black Power required U.S. News to present King as an alternative to a greater evil.

The activities of King in Chicago were, however, all but ignored by U.S. News for several months, except insofar as it responded to them by asserting that Chicago was a model for cities that were attempting to solve their problems, including those of race.[49] Thus, implicitly, U.S. News was also asserting that there was no need for King to be in Chicago.

Near the end of April of 1966, however, Lawrence's magazine resumed its echo chamber campaign. The theme was the pernicious doctrine of civil disobedience; the speaker was the retired Supreme Court justice Charles Whittaker, whose warning was this: "Return to Law, or Face Anarchy." While Whittaker's speech, as published by U.S. News, was a far-ranging conservative broadside against social change, the magazine gave particular emphasis to excerpts dealing with civil disobedience. The identification of King was contextual, as in the following statement:

> "....These racial leaders and their groups quickly enlarged the scope of their activity by massing and marching followers on the sidewalks, streets, and highways, frequently blocking and appropriating them to a degree that precluded their intended public uses.
>
> "And that conduct, too, being nearly always appeased,. . .spread from one Southern city to another, and then into one Northern city after another, and eventually pretty generally throughout the land. These 'demonstrations' were conducted under the banner of 'peaceable civil disobedience'. . . ."[50]

The situation thus created, Whittaker warned in the conspiratorial tones favored by U.S. News, was "tailor-made for infiltration, take-over, and use by rabble-rousers and radicals who are avowedly bent on the breakdown of law, order, and morality in our society." Given the fact that Whittaker had combined both themes--King was a subversive and his doctrine of civil disobedience would destroy the rule of law--promoted by U.S. News, it was perhaps not surprising that the justice's remarks should be echoed later by David Lawrence.[51]

The initial response of U.S. News to the resumption of the Meredith March was more or less a mirror of its thesis about the Chicago Freedom Movement:

that is to say, the demonstration was unnecessary. This interpretation became untenable after Carmichael raised the Black Power cry, and U.S. News found itself in the position of having to realign its stock of symbols. On one side was King, proclaiming that he had not lost faith in nonviolence. Joined with Carmichael on the other was Floyd McKissick of the Congress of Racial Equality. In a statement that probably struck U.S. News as close to treason, Carmichael declared that nonviolence was a closed subject, not to be reopened until President Johnson "is ready to talk nonviolence with the Viet Cong." McKissick went even further, deriding nonviolence as a "dying philosophy."[52]

In sum, Martin Luther King was back in the good graces of U.S. News, but it had taken Stokely Carmichael and Floyd McKissick to get him there.

And quickly enough the magazine repented, removing the mantle of moderation that it had draped about King's shoulders. This came after King shifted the focus of his activism from Mississippi to Chicago.

The message that U.S. News was sending out amounted to the declaration that King preached one thing and did another. For one, he shared a speaker's platform in Chicago with McKissick; from the magazine's perspective, that was no better than consorting with the enemy. And there was this business of nonviolence, re-examined when U.S. News reported disorders that broke out in Chicago on July 12. The magazine's thesis was stated for it by the president of an association of policemen: "'Wherever he goes and preaches nonviolence, violence erupts." The reason, put for U.S. News by another official in Chicago's city government, was this:

> "You simply can't get together crowds of people in sweltering heat, many of them illiterate, tell them how bad off they are, work them up, and then expect them to do nothing. You can't control them--and he can't."[53]

. . ."He," in both cases, being, of course, Martin Luther King.

Whether indeed "their" plight was as bad as pictured was not a question that U.S. News entertained, probably because the answer would have been in the affirmative. Instead, it focused upon control of the situation. And there King appeared to offer no hope; he was not "safe"--as he had seemed to be when U.S. News offered him as an alterative to Black Power, and by the next issue, that of August 1, King was dropped from a list of black leaders who advocated nonviolence.[54]

The echo chamber operated with an almost savage intensity into the fall. King was depicted variously as a radical, a troublemaker, or as a subversive. In most cases, he was identified contextually, as in a column written by Lawrence decrying the "wave of discontent. . . sweeping the country today." Lawrence's rhetorical question was, "Why, then, are the leaders of the civil rights movement preaching 'nonviolence,' but, in effect, arousing passions and inciting people to violence?" Lawrence had his answer at hand, and it took the form of other questions riddled with hints of conspiracy:

> Are the outbreaks spontaneous or planned? Why the sudden appearance of firebombs and shotguns in the crowds. Why all the arson?
>
> What is the record and background of some of the top advisers who sit beside certain gullible leaders in the civil rights movement and plan "targets" for the mobilization of demonstrators?
>
> Why has the information about subversive activities been withheld? Why is this minimized as incidental?[55]

Any readers so oblivious of the Chicago Freedom Movement and King's role in it that they could not catch the references to preaching one thing and practicing another needed wait only a week's time. In the issue of August 8, King was one of those named directly as helping to "spread a riot mood in the U.S."--and the magazine published what amounted to a rogue's gallery (save for photographs) of reckless agitators. That thesis was echoed and re-echoed in U.S. News[56] until the coverage of King was concluded in September.

And it concluded on the same note from the same source that had begun it in 1966. This was, of course, Mr. Justice Whittaker, who brought U.S. News

full circle with his denunciation--monotonous by now--of the "irresponsible and inflammatory preachments of some self-appointed leaders of minority groups 'to obey the good laws, but to violate the bad ones'--which, of course, simply advocates. . .the taking of the law into their own hands."[57]

1967: The War and Poor People's Campaign

In 1967, King became involved in the issue of the Vietnam war again. The difference was that, as opposed to his statement supporting a negotiated settlement of the war in 1965, King condemned his country's war in the bitterest of terms. In addition, near the end of the year, King made public the preliminary plans for his most ambitious and radical campaign, an alliance of the poor--black, white, red, and brown--which was styled the Poor People's movement.[58] As might be expected, his opposition to the war and his plans for a campaign of the poor in Washington led to intensification of the echo chamber campaign. As was the case in the previous two years, however, the attack was interrupted briefly when U.S. News found him useful to counter a greater threat.

The first echo of the campaign against King in 1967 was sounded by Mr. Justice Whittaker, who had issued the last one of 1966.[59] But the most strident response occurred because of King's opposition to the war, in particular his devastating critique of the morality of that engagement. On April 4, 1967, he delivered what came to be known as the Riverside Church speech in New York:

> We have destroyed their [the Vietnamese] two most cherished institutions: the family and the village. We have destroyed their land and their crops. We have cooperated in the crushing of the nation's only non-Communist revolutionary force--the Unified Buddhist Church. We have supported the enemies of the peasants. . . . We have corrupted their women and children and killed their men. What liberators!. . .
>
> What do they think as we test our latest weapons on them, just as the Germans tested our medicine and new tortures in the concentration camps of Europe.[60]

In the past, U.S. News had complained of the toleration of criticism of the war; such dissent, so it asserted, bordered on treason. In the case of

King's Riverside Church speech, the magazine said in effect that this was occurring again because King was "'almost lining up with Hanoi.'" Furthermore, King was ignorant of foreign affairs and, more important, an ingrate, unappreciative of the rights that had been secured for him by others willing to water the Tree of Liberty with their blood. The latter point was driven home by using the device of a parable provided by the chaplain of the United States Senate:

> In America, a man stood up in a free pulpit to preach. . . .Rhetorically, he asked, "What has a sword ever accomplished worthwhile?"
> In a pew was a worshipper [who] said to the clergyman: "The sword in the hand of those who have resisted militant evil has given you the right to stand here today and to proclaim your convictions without fear of being liquidated."[61]

To ensure that there would be no mistake about the target of those remarks, an editor's note added that King "has been saying that the United States is 'the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today.' Some other clergymen echo hat view as they condemn the war in Vietnam."[62]

By no means was that the last word U.S. News had on the subject. King was depicted, in effect, as not just a traitor to his country but a traitor to his race because of his opposition to a war that was "channeling Negroes into the middle class." He was, furthermore, painted as an opportunist who wished to use the anti-war movement as a base for a presidential campaign. Nor did U.S. News neglect opportunities to portray him as a trouble-maker.[63]

Still, U.S. News found itself once more in need of King as a symbol of moderation, this arising following an oubreak of rioting in the summer that produced an exceptionally grim set of statistics: more than eighty persons killed, almost fourteen hundred injured, and almost seventeen thousand arrested.[64]

King appeared as a leader of moderation and reason, urging in fact, as the headline in U.S. News had it, "'Mob Law--Let's End It Now!'" There was considerable irony to this interpretation--U.S. News having consistently employed

King in almost precisely the opposite fashion since 1964. But U.S. News had little choice in the matter: King was beyond dispute a powerful symbol for blacks, the bloody Newark riot was just past, and conditions in ghettos remained volatile to say the least. And, to be sure, there was a certain consistency to the inconsistency of David Lawrence's magazine, which had cast about on occasions in the past for someone to counter SNCC or Black Power and had, however grudgingly, come up with King.

Furthermore, King was in good company, which is to say fairly conservative company, given the increasingly radical tenor of the times. He had joined with Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, Whitney Young of the Urban League--perhaps the two most conservative of the major black organizations--and with A. Philip Randolph, the black labor leader, who was no conservative but no Stokely Carmichael either. Together they had issued a statement condemning the rioting and urging that order be restored. With Carmichael, and his successor as chairman of SNCC, H. Rap Brown, preaching doctrines of fire and blood, U.S. News could hardly be in a position to attack King. It described him and the other co-signers of that statement as "among the most responsible of the civil rights leaders."[65]

That label was attached to King in the issue of August 7. Three weeks later, that "most responsible" black leader had reverted to threatening form:

> Riot-torn cities of the North now face a new threat of Negro disruption.
>
> The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., is organizing what he calls "civil disobedience on a massive scale." Here are some of the things he talks about:
>
> A march on Washington by thousands of unemployed Negroes who would camp out in the capital city somewhat like the "bonus marchers" of 1932.
>
> A "hungry people's sit-in" at the Department of Labor in Washington.
>
> School boycotts on a weekly basis. The idea, as Dr. King put it, is "forcefully to cripple the operations of an oppressive society."[66]

For a national publication, U.S. News now and then betrayed an unusual skittishness--which ran tolerably close to hysteria, for instance, on the

occasion of the 1963 March on Washington--when it came to the prospect of demonstrations by blacks in its home city. That aside, the sense of King as a radical was fairly accurate. As was, for that matter, the sense of U.S. News that King was becoming a dangerous man when it came to the established order in American society. To be sure, King was not abandoning either nonviolence or the idea that America could become a truly integrated society; neither was he sanguine that his Poor People's Campaign in Washington would succeed merely by pricking the consciences of the white leaders of the nation. Those decision-makers, said King in a speech in Atlanta in August, would have to be forced to take actions that would relieve the misery of the poor, and that this would be brought about through disruptions on a massive scale of the cities where most production was carried out, where most Americans lived, and without which the suburbs would wither and die.[67] In short, King was not planning an appeal to good will and to the ideals upon which the nation was founded; the power of nonviolence would be bent toward coercion and away from persuasion.

Predictably, the reverberations rose in the echo chamber:

> Being accepted rather widely, as a result of racial demonstrations in recent years, is the view that people are entitled to disobey laws they don't like. Result is rioting that has neared civil war in some cities. . . .The idea grows that rioters are entitled to shoot, burn, and loot. On August 15, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., civil rights leader who preaches nonviolence, blamed the widespread destruction and bloodshed in the cities this summer not on the rioters, but on the "policy-makers of the white society."[68]

King's radicalism did not stand alone. A mosaic was being constructed by U.S. News, and it included the elements that threatened its ordered society--pornography, welfare, crime and violence, and, of course, the familiar themes of foreign and domestic conspiracy.[69] Still, the magazine did not neglect King; as one of those threats, he was an important part of the mosaic.

There was, to take a leading example, the broadside delivered by Louis F. Powell, a former president of the American Bar Association who was later to be

appointed to the Supreme Court by President Nixon. Powell attacked civil disobedience as heresy in America and King as the chief heretic. In addition, King was placed in the company of radicals who were "determined to remake America--not by the democratic processes. . ., but by varing forms and degrees of coercion." Nor did Powell neglect the tactic of proving guilt by association. Certain anti-war activities in which King participated, Powell maintained darkly, were "instigated and dominated by Communists and fellow travelers," or were the handiwork of coalitions that "includes well-known Communist allies." With few exceptions, the echo chamber campaign, which warned not only of anarchy but of insurrection fostered by Communists, continued almost to the end of the year.[70]

1968: Memphis and the Poor People's Campaign

In 1968, Martin Luther King sought to fill a new role, as a class leader. He was determined to bring together not only blacks but poor whites, impoverished American Indians and Hispanics into a social movement of the poor. Structuring a social movement along class lines would have been controversial enough in a society in which class interests and class coalitions were at best suspect notions and at worst smacked of the alien doctrines of Communism. On top of this was that element of coercion. To be sure, it would be nonviolent in nature, but the effects could be enormously disruptive. As King put it, the leaders of the nation would be forced to heed the cries of the poor; either that or watch as the cities of the nation were crippled by disruption brought about by civil disobedience. In sum, by 1968 the man had caught up with the definition of him that had been offered since 1964 by U.S. News & World Report.

And U.S. News continued to promote that definition in the months before King's death in 1968. In the first such story of the year, the actual threat was posed by persons other than King; they promised to disrupt the Democratic

National Convention in Chicago. U.S. News delved into its files to 1966 and the Chicago Freedom Movement. It found the example of a court's injunction that had been employed to stop demonstrations led by King in that coalition. The effect of the story was that the injunction had been effective against one trouble-maker, this being King, would be so again against others bent on the same kind of disruption.[71] The echo chamber was back in operation.

Three weeks later, a similar point was made. The context was the decision of the American Civil Liberties Union to decline to provide counsel for clients involved in most instances of civil disobedience and disruption. That somewhat general point was driven into the specific instance of King's plan to "wage a campaign of massive civil disobedience in the nation's capital. . .in the first week of next April."[72]

Two issues later, U.S. News gratuitously interjected the Poor People's Movement into an article that was concerned with the possibility of rioting during the coming months. It was gratuitous because the purpose of the story was to report about new weapons and tactics being readied for the expected disorders. Another echo was forthcoming in three weeks. U.S. News published a warning of a coming "siege of Congress and the White House." It could only be averted if the demands of the demonstrators were met, but the magazine advised ominously: "If no satisfactory response is forthcoming--and Dr. King concedes that he expects none--then thousands of marchers will start moving on Washington. . . .It is predicted that tens of thousands of marchers might eventually gather in Washington. Mass demonstrators are also to be held in other big cities."[73]

In March, a portent of the coming disorders became available to U.S. News. It was produced by a strike by city garbage collectors, most of whom were black, in Memphis, the largest city in Tennessee. The strike had begun as a relatively simple labor dispute, but it was quickly transformed into a racial

cause due to the intransigence of the city fathers and wide identification with the black laborers within the black community of Memphis. King's involvement was late and, initially, very limited. He addressed a rally of the strikers and their supporters, and promised to return to lead a demonstration march through the city. In late March, he flew to Memphis to fulfill that promise. The march had been organized by local black ministers, not King's men, and they botched the job. A few minutes into the march, violence and looting broke out. King's aides took him out of the march after the trouble began, an action which led to accusations that King was a coward. More important, the disorders--which were fairly limited--that followed the march came to be taken as a warning of what would happen in Washington.[74]

And both accusations appeared in U.S. News. Its questioning of King's courage was given an added twist that suggested a furtive conspiracy. King had, so U.S. News reported, "slipped down a side street to a waiting car and sped away."[75] [Emphasis added] In effect, then, the demonstration was deliberately staged to bring about violence, and realizing this King had taken steps for his own safety.

King was forced to bend his energies to proving that he could lead a nonviolent march in Memphis. He never had the opportunity to do this; while organizing another march in Memphis, he was murdered by a sniper firing from ambush on April 4, 1968. Even if he had been successful, it is doubtful that this would have altered the opinion of U.S. News about that enterprise. Its attitude appeared with stark clarity in a final note provided for the magazine by a United States senator, Robert Byrd of West Virginia. It was, quite simply, that Memphis was "a 'preview of what may be in store' for Washington 'if this self-seeking rabble-rouser is allowed to go through with his plans.'"[76] On that note the echo chamber campaign against King essentially subsided into silence.

Epilogue

There was a final service that this "self-seeking rabble-rouser" could perform for U.S. News & World Report. He could become almost precisely the opposite of that which the magazine had maintained for five years. The dangerous radical who consorted with Communists, or was one himself; the promoter of civil disobedience, the doctrine that was weakening and could destroy the very foundations of the Republic; the reckless leader who intended to lay siege to the government of the United States--that King was no longer present in the pages of U.S. News & World Report.

Instead, King became with his death the "Negro leader who preaches not revolution but brotherhood." And from the rewriting of the reports published by U.S. News in the past, it would appear that King had always been a preacher of that gospel:

> . . .his dedication was to a struggle, which he preached, must be waged without violence. It was devotion to this idea which had won Dr. King, at 35, the Nobel Peace Prize. . . . His crusade in the South stressed "passive disobedience" of segregation laws. . . .Dr. King led a series of "marches" on which world attention was focused when police turned dogs on Negro marchers. Dr. King, urging restraint, was credited with preventing a major battle between Negroes and police.[77]

There was, of course, more done to convert King from false prophet to a prophet of America. The most noteworthy was the reinterpretation of that triumph of idealism, the 1963 March on Washington. In 1963, U.S. News had limited King's role in that demonstration to the fact that he had momentarily stirred the crowd with a call for militancy. On that occasion, U.S. News had been unwilling to permit the sacred phrases of the Declaration of Independence to issue from King's lips. Five years later, following his death, King had been transformed into the leader of the 1963 March on Washington, and rather than preaching militant action he had been on that occasion merely expressing his faith in his country, using those soaring phrases of Jefferson to maintain that "I have

a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal....'"[78]

What was occurring appears in retrospect to be a wrenching change of course on the part of U.S. News. It was, however, no more rapid and but little more startling than the previous transformations of King that U.S. News had wrought. And the reason behind the transformation was the same: the magazine found itself in urgent need of King's force as a symbol in the culture. After King's death, others, most notably Stokely Carmichael, late of SNCC, had replaced King as the threat. Against Carmichael-the-radical, King-the-reformer, the symbol of reason, the leader following the middle way, was counterposed.

Why this should be happening requires some unraveling. The first and most obvious reason is that symbols of moderation and reason were rather hard to come by in 1968. That idea was caught best, in fact, by a competitor of U.S. News. Time magazine, an organ in which optimism and faith in America had ever welled, found itself confronted by bloody rioting, demonstrations, assassinations and other manifestations of social upheaval, and it could only account for those happenings in America by figuratively throwing up its hands and observing that history was "just one damn thing after another." In such dangerous times, no symbol so powerful in the culture as was Martin Luther King could be lightly discarded by U.S. News. Its emphasis that King, "urging restraint," prevented a violent confrontation, was a sign of this.

The second reason was more complicated. In part, it was a matter that King no longer was a threat to U.S. News. But the matter went further than that. In order that King be used effectively, U.S. News had to employ him as a counter-symbol to others, and in doing this would have to offer him as a reformer whose actions reified the American Creed of justice and equality, that Creed of which Myrdal wrote.

For five years, the echo chamber campaign had represented a fierce struggle by a conservative magazine against the widely held definition of King as a symbol. Now, in 1968, when others were preaching doctrines of fire and blood, U.S. News had urgent, almost desperate need of Martin Luther King. False prophet no more, "safe" at last in its eyes, King became in the pages of U.S. News & World Report an American prophet of peace.[79]

NOTES

References to magazine articles are to U.S. News & World Report unless otherwise indicated.

[1]The best development of this approach is to be found in A.C.H. Smith et al., Paper Voices: The Popular Press and Social Change, 1935-1965 (London: Chatto & Windus, 1975). See especially, Stuart Hall, "Introduction," pp. 11-24.

[2]Richard Hofstadter, The Paranoid Style in American Politics (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965).

[3]Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944), p. 1.

[4]Kai T. Erikson, Wayward Puritans: A Study in the Sociology of Deviance (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1966), p. 69.

[5]The importance of journalistic selection is discussed by a number of scholars. See, e.g., Todd Gitlin, The Whole World is Watching (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p. 6. In the particular case of U.S. News & World Report, the process of selecting public documents, speeches, books, and articles that fitted its editorial position appears quite clearly in the Albert L. Warner papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison. See, e.g., Warner to "IH," 25 February 1964, Reel 3, and Warner to "OLS", 27 July 1967, Reel 4.

[6]Ben H. Bagdikian, "The Newsmagazines: I--U.S. News & World Report," The New Republic, 2 February 1959, p. 14.

[7]Time magazine, of course, eschewed the idea of journalistic objectivity. For a good exposition of its position, see lecture by Otto Fuerbringer at the School of Journalism, University of Missouri, October, 1958, pp. 6-9. T. George Harris papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Box 15, File 7. Newsweek indirectly asserted journalistic objectivity as a norm through its practice of publishing columns and, as well, its early sloganeering that it "separated fact from opinion." The latter was, however, a marketing ploy, not taken seriously by its editors. See Osborn Elliott, The World of Oz (New York: Viking Press, 1980), especially p. 31. The point as to U.S. News is not whether journalistic objectivity existed; rather that it was an important part of the persona of the magazine. For a devastating critique of assertions about objectivity, see Gaye Tuchman, "Objectivity as Strategic Ritual: An Examination of Newsmen's Notions of Objectivity," American Journal of Sociology 77 (January, 1972): 660-679.

[8]At first blush, it may appear farcical to include Time's Man of the Year award in the same category as that of the Nobel Prize. The former has become, however, a cultural event with a meaning independent of its origins as a journalistic device. For an appreciation in passing of Time and its cover stories, see W.A. Swanberg, Luce and His Empire (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972), p. 85.

[9]A good example of the attitude at U.S. News is to be found in Albert Warner to "OLS," 27 July 1967, recommending a story based upon tributes to Hoover published in the Congressional Record. "There could be brief quotes on what he stands for. . .on crime, Communism, civil rights, civil disobedience, Americanism. . . ." Warner papers, Reel 4. Hoover apparently reciprocated; for an early indication of his regard for David Lawrence (and no doubt for Lawrence's magazine), see Hoover to Lawrence, 4 September 1956. David Lawrence papers, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University Library, uncatalogued. It should be pointed out, however, that at least on one occasion U.S. News declined to publish a derogatory report about King that the FBI was circulating. See Frank M. Sorrentino, "Bureaucratic Ideology: The Case Study of the Federal Bureau of Identification" (Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1976), p. 210.

[10]See "Boycotts Will Be Used," 24 February 1964, p. 61, and "In South: Racial Trouble--and a Threat of More," 30 March 1964, pp. 8-9.

[11]C. Eric Lincoln, My Face is Black (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), pp. 107-108.

[12]As in articles with references to King's 1963 Birmingham campaign and remarks by Malcolm X; the publication of a photograph of King and Malcolm X shaking hands, with accompanying text that noted that the two men had agreed on the prospects for "direct action"; and a notation that Malcolm X advocated the formation of "rifle clubs" by blacks in certain areas. See "Now It's Negro Drive for Segregation," 30 March 1964, p. 39, and "A Summer of Race Violence on the Way?" 6 April 1964, p. 34.

[13]See "Reds and Negroes--'An Unhappy Secret,'" 27 April 1964, p. 34; "J. Edgar Hoover Speaks Out on Reds in the Negro Movement," 4 May 1964, p. 33; and David Lawrence, "The Enemy Within Our Gates," 4 May 1964, p. 108.

[14]Hoover's notation is mentioned by the Senate Select Committee to Study Government Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, Supplementary Detailed Staff Reports on Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans, Book III, Final Report, No. 94-755 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1976), p. 82. The scope of the FBI's attempt to destroy King is described by Sorrentino, p. 78, who added that the agency, fully cognizant of King's symbolic importance, was interested in discrediting him even after his death. Ibid., pp. 213-214.

[15]Hoover's remarks appear in "The FBI and Civil Rights--J. Edgar Hoover Speaks Out," and King's in "Martin Luther King's Reaction--A Statement and a Disagreement," pp. 56-57 and 58, respectively, in the issue of 30 November 1964. In its political gossip column, "Washington Whispers," the magazine carefully noted that Hoover "made sure that there were no White House objections before giving his opinion recently on the. . .actions of the FBI in enforcement of civil rights." 7 December 1964, p. 26. This had the effect of invoking the immense social and political authority of the Presidency on Hoover's behalf.

[16]The term, "Negro spokesmen," probably was intended to include Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, who also had voiced criticism of the FBI's operations in the South. Emphasis given to King in previous articles is convincing evidence that the primary target was not Wilkins but King.

[17]"Next: A National Police Force," 7 December 1964, p. 44. U.S. News carefully passed over examples of national police forces less destructive of political freedom, focusing instead upon Soviet bloc states and Nazi Germany, the examples which made its case most strongly.

[18]"What J. Edgar Hoover Says About Pressure Groups," 7 December 1964, p. 45.

[19]There can be little doubt that Hoover intended the remark about "moral degenerates" to apply to King. See David J. Garrow, The FBI and Martin Luther King, Jr.: From "Solo" to Memphis (New York: W.W. Norton, 1981), pp. 151-172, passim. However, it is critical not to take present knowledge as indicating what was known in 1964. Because the FBI had been unsuccessful in peddling stories about King's sex life to the press, the statement about moral degenerates stands apart from public knowledge of other elements of the widely publicized confrontation between Hoover and King.

[20]In a five-page, question-and-answer article, "Interview with J. Edgar Hoover," 21 December 1964, p. 38.

[21]A curious exception being the reprinting of an article written by Eric Hoffer, "'The Negro is Prejudiced Against Himself," 28 December 1964, pp. 49, 51, although there was much in Hoffer's article with which U.S. News would be in agreement when it came to black Americans and the civil rights movement.

[22]The best sources on the Selma campaign are Charles E. Fager, Selma, 1965 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974), and David J. Garrow, Protest at Selma: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978).

[23]"How Martin Luther King Won the Nobel Peace Prize," 8 February 1965, p. 76. See also, "Man of Conflict Wins a Peace Prize," 26 October 1964, p. 24.

[24]The evidence suggests that the SCLC, as it had in Birmingham, had carefully scouted Sheriff Clark as a potential if unwitting ally who would bring about a national reaction by clumsy repression of the demonstrations. That anticipation was realized; so important was Clark's contribution that Ralph David Abernathy, King's principal deputy, quipped that Clark should be voted honorary membership in the SCLC. Quoted in Fager, p. 34.

[25]David Lawrence, "Bowing to the New Extremists," 29 March 1965, p. 112.

[26]See William M. Kunstler, Deep in My Heart (New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1966), p. 355, and Fager, Selma, 1965, pp. 140-141.

[27]"After Alabama...Negroes' Next Battlegrounds," 5 April 1965, p. 38.

[28]"Martin Luther King: Who He Is...What He Believes," 5 April 1965, p. 18.

[29]"After Alabama...Negroes' Next Battlegrounds," p. 38.

[30]"National Police Force? 'No,' Says FBI Chief Hoover," 12 April 1965, p. 20.

[31]David Lawrence, "Is the Clergyman Changing His Role?" 19 April 1965, p. 116.

[32]"How the Army Got Set to Move into Selma," 10 May 1965, p. 16.

[33]See ibid. U.S. News had already provided a breakdown of expenses incurred by federal forces in "What the March Cost--and Who Paid for It," 5 April 1965, p. 38.

[34]"What Really Happened on Alabama March," 10 May 1965, p. 17.

[35]Ibid.

[36]"Lawlessness in U.S.--Warning from a Top Jurist," 5 July 1965, p. 60.

[37]See respectively, "More Campus Unrest--Are Reds to Blame?" 10 May 1965, p. 14; "Washington Whispers," 8 March 1965, p. 22; "How U.S. Reds Campaign for a Vietnam Pullout," 17 May 1965, p. 22; "Washington Whispers," 17 May 1965, p. 27; and "From J. Edgar Hoover: A Report on Campus Reds," 31 May 1965, p. 84.

[38]"Communists and Civil Rights--How Closely Linked?" 12 July 1965, p. 12.

[39]David Lawrence, "Is This the 'Land of the Free'?" 12 July 1965, p. 108.

[40]King's speech outlining his position on the war in 1965 was delivered to the SCLC convention in Birmingham on August 12, 1965. A copy is to be found in the King Center archive, Atlanta, Box 28, File 7. The criticism of King due to his statements is discussed by David L. Lewis, King: A Biography, 2nd ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978), p. 304. On the response of the Johnson administration, see Harris Wofford, Of Kennedys and Kings: Making Sense of the Sixties (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1980), p. 221. His cautious approach later is illustrated by the characterization of his remarks about the war as being delivered with "extreme discretion," when he spoke in Paris. The reaction of the Paris press is described in America, "Dr. King and the Paris Press," 13 November 1965, p. 560.

[41]"Is Vietnam to Become a Civil Rights Issue?" 19 July 1965, p. 12.

[42]See Jim Bishop, The Days of Martin Luther King, Jr. (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1971), p. 441; Milton Viorst, Fire in the Streets: America in the 1960's (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979), pp. 310-320, 341, passim.

[43]As when it employed King as a symbol to counter the danger posed by such groups as the Deacons for Defense, a black organization that advocated armed self-defense. See "Shifting Patterns in Race Problem," 23 August 1965, p. 37.

[44]Ibid., p. 33.

[45]The silence on this point appears all the more studied because U.S. News did report that the black entertainer and social activist, Dick Gregory, was wounded while attempting to help restore peace in Watts. Ibid., p. 37.

[46]"When Negroes Tried to Shock a Friendly City," 13 September 1965, pp. 46-48. It is possible that the failure to identify CORE as the organization involved in Springfield was inadvertent, but such a failure also would have to be read as a violation of the most basic journalistic procedures.

[47]"Dr. King's Policy: Invitation to Racial Violence?" 4 October 1965, p. 22.

[48]Other echoes on King and civil disobedience are to be found in David Lawrence's columns, "The Wrong Way," 30 August 1965, p. 88, and "The Right to Loot," 6 September 1965, p. 100. More faintly sounded was the echo of Mr. Justice Whittaker's remarks in "Ex-Justice Severs Supreme Court Ties," 1 November 1965, p. 14. An additional echoe of the conspiratorial tone sounded about King and Communists appears in "Communist Gains Among Youths--J. Edgar Hoover Reports," 1 November 1965, p. 46, and about Communist infilatration and involvement in the anti-war movement, ibid. Contextual identification of King was provided in these references.

[49]See, e.g., "Chicago: A Big City Meets Its Problems," 28 March 1966, p. 74.

[50]"A Former Justice Warns: Return to Law, or Face Anarchy," 25 April 1966, p. 60.

[51]David Lawrence, "Are Provocative Demonstrations Really Necessary?" 20 June 1966, p. 112.

[52]The thesis that the Meredith March was unnecessary is implicit in "The Strange March Through Mississippi," 27 June 1966, p. 48, when the magazine pointed out that blacks encountered no obstacles to registering to vote. It blandly noted that black voters did not outnumber white voters in an area with more of the former than the latter, but did not choose to inquire into the reasons why this was so. King was juxtaposed against Carmichael and McKissick in "Negro Leaders Dividing--the Effect," 18 July 1966, see especially p. 22.

[53]"As Negro Unrest Continues to Spread," 25 July 1966, p. 30.

[54]"A 'Black Power' Advocate in a Powerful Post," 1 August 1965, p. 8. The subject of the article was, however, Harlem Congressman Adam Clayton Powell.

[55]David Lawrence, "Who Is to Blame?" 1 August 1966, p. 84.

[56]"Rouse the Masses," 8 August 1966, pp. 40-41. Other echoes appear in Richard Nixon, "If Mob Rule Takes Hold in U.S.--A Warning from Richard Nixon," 15 August 1966, p. 64; "A Down-to-Earth Look at a Growing Problem," 22 August 1966, p. 53.

[57]Charles Whittaker, "Planned Lawlessness Threatens to Get Out of Hand," 19 September 1966, p. 37.

[58]The best treatment of the Poor People's movement is Charles Fager, Uncertain Resurrection: The Poor People's Washington Campaign (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1969).

[59]"Blamed in Crime Rise: Civil Rights Excesses," 27 February 1967, p. 15. A fainter echo of King as trouble-maker appears in "Growing Unrest in Catholic Church," 27 March 1967, p. 60.

[60]Martin Luther King, Jr., Speeches by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., About the War in Vietnam (New York: Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam, n.d.), p. 6. King Center archive, Box 28, File 43.

[61]Frederick Brown Harris, "'The Blade of a Righteous Sword,'" 24 April 1967, p. 120. The remarks occupied the space normally given over to Lawrence's column.

[62]Ibid.

[63]"Growing Success of Negroes in the U.S.: The Story That's Being Overlooked," 3 July 1967, p. 54; "Dr. King's Crusade: How He Hopes to End the War," 8 May 1967, p. 14; and "What Third Parties Might Do to '68 Race," 26 June 1967, p. 10; "U.S. Race Riot Outlook for '67--What Negro Leaders Predict," 1 May 1967, pp. 42, 44.

[64]Commission on CIA Activities within the United States, Report to the President (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1975), p. 286.

[65]"'Mob Law'--Let's End It Now," 7 August 1967, p. 11.

[66]"New Negro Threat: Mass Disobedience," 28 August 1967, p. 10.

[67]See King's speech to SCLC convention, August 15, 1967, Atlanta. King Center archive, Box 28, File 37.

[68]"Is There a 'Sick' Society in the U.S.?" 28 August 1967, pp. 49-50.

[69]See respectively, ibid.; "Militant Clergy--Critics Fire Back," 27 November 1967, pp. 66-68; "Is Castro Behind Guerrilla War in U.S. Cities?" 14 August 1967, p. 24, and "Search Starts for Cause of Riots in U.S. Cities," 13 November 1967, pp. 53-54.

[70]Lewis F. Powell, Jr., "'Civil Disobedience: Prelude to Revolution?'" 30 October 1967, pp. 66-68. One exception to the pattern was the report that even King could not stomach the "left-wing extremists" who were in search of a presidential candidate; King "took one look at the meeting," and moved on to other things. See "Black Power: A Third Party Going Nowhere," 18 September 1967, p. 78. More representative was the attempt to place the Poor People's Campaign within a radical framework in "Is Insurrection Brewing in U.S.?" 25 December 1967, p. 33.

[71]"Will Violence Upset '68 Campaign?" 22 January 1968, p. 47.

[72]"A 'Liberal' Group Speaks Out Against Draft Violating, Rioting," 12 February 1968, p. 68.

[73]"As Cities Prepare for Riots--New Weapons, New Tactics," 26 February 1968, p. 37; "March on Washington--What to Expect," 18 March 1968, p. 44.

[74]See Richard Lentz, "Sixty-Five Days in Memphis: The Commercial Appeal, the Press-Scimitar, and the 1968 Garbage Strike" (M.A. thesis, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, 1976), pp. 100, 104-112, passim; Gerold Frank, An American Death (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co, Inc., 1972), p. 28 The circumstances surrounding King's initial involvement in the Memphis strike are described by his public relations director in interview with Thomas Offenburger by Katherine Shannon, 2 July 1968, pp. 32-33. See transcript of tape 227, Oral history collection, Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Howard University, Washington, D.C.

[75]"'Bloody Memphis'--and More to Come?" 8 April 1968, p. 8.

[76]Ibid.

[77]"'Even If I Die in the Struggle--'" 15 April 1968, p. 33.

[78]Ibid. The original report of King's speech is "As 200,000 Marched in Washington--" 9 September 1963, p. 40.

[79]For a detailed discussion, see Richard Lentz, "Resurrecting the Prophet: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the News Magazines" (Ph.D., dissertation, University of Iowa, 1983), chapters 16 and 17, passim.